

U.S. Embassy Awards \$100,000 in Grants for Innovative Reform Programs

As part of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, the U.S. Embassy in 2004 gave \$100,000 in grants to local organizations in support of Tunisian efforts in the areas of political, economic, and educational reform and women's rights. They are as follows:

1. *Human Rights and Legal Assistance for Rural Women* – \$25,000 was granted to Tunisian NGO the International Solidarity Association to support their program aimed at providing health, literacy, and social assistance to rural women and developing methods of sustaining these services. The ISA will work with three rural villages in the Takrouna Governate, teaching women their fundamental rights as well as strengthening their basic reading and literacy skills.
2. *Awareness Campaign on Corporate Governance in Tunisia* - \$25,000 was granted to the Arab Institute for Business Leaders for the development of a corporate governance awareness campaign for the Tunisian private sector, including a conference held on October 7, 2004 and documentation on the topic. This project supports the important goal of promoting greater corporate transparency and governance and the development of a business Code of Ethics in order to encourage greater economic growth and attraction of international investment based on international standards.
3. *Support for family businesses in Tunisia* - \$25,000 was granted to the Mediterranean School of Business (MSB) to fund a conference leading to the creation of a Family Business Center. This project responds to the needs of young entrepreneurs managing traditional businesses and looking for new models to better compete in an increasingly global marketplace.
4. *English Language Training for Journalists* – \$25,000 was granted to AMIDEAST to provide English language training for Tunisian journalists. The goal of this program is to respond to an urgent demand for enhanced communication between the United States and journalists in the Arab world.

MEPI is the U.S. Government's flagship initiative to support economic, political, and educational reform efforts in North Africa and the Middle East and to champion opportunity for all people of the region, especially women and youth. The initiative strives to link regional, U.S., and global businesses, non-governmental organizations, civil society elements, and governments together to develop innovative policies and programs that support reform in the region.

As part of this program, U.S. Embassies around the region are annually allocated \$100,000 to provide small grants of between \$10,000 and \$25,000 to local organizations for capacity building projects that support MEPI goals and objectives. For more information, including information on how to apply for a grant, please consult the Embassy website at www.tunis.usembassy.gov.